On the Genus Oceanapia, *Norman* (Rhizochalina *of Oscar Schmidt*). By Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S. &c.

Mr. Norman, in his "Report on the Shetland Dredgings," in the Report of the British Association for 1868, p. 334, describes a genus under the name of *Oceanapia*, founded on a sponge which Dr. Bowerbank had described under the name of *Desmacidon Jeffreysii*; and he considers a sponge which Dr. Bowerbank referred to another genus and called *Isodictya robusta* to be founded on fragments of the same sponge.

Dr. Bowerbank not only refers the sponge and the fragments to two different genera, which, according to their characters, have a most distinct organic structure, but in the specific character he describes *Isodictya robusta* as being possessed of simple bihamate retentive spicules, which he does not describe as existing in *Desmacidon Jeffreysii*.

Oscar Schmidt, in his work on Atlantic Sponges, published in 1870, overlooking Mr. Norman's genus *Oceanapia*, republishes the sponge under the name of *Rhizochalina*, and figures two species (*R. olivacea* and *R. carotta*) which appear to be separated on very slight characters.

Dr. Bowerbank, in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society' for 1873, describes and figures a species (*Desmacidon fistulosa*, t. iv.) which he compares to *D. Jeffreysii*, evidently forgetting that Mr. Norman made this species into a new genus having a very peculiar external form and habit.

Sponges from Ceylon. By Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S. &c.

E. W. H. Holdsworth, Esq., has kindly presented the specimens of sponges which he obtained on the Pearl-banks and on the beach near his house at Aripo, on the north-west side of the island of Ceylon, to the British Museum.

These specimens have been reported upon by Dr. Bowerbank (P. Z. S. 1873, p. 25), and four of them figured and described. Dr. Bowerbank considers them as belonging to 18 species. I do not venture to give any opinion as to their distinctness; but they appear to be separated on wonderfully slight characters.

Mr. Holdsworth some time ago sent to the Museum a specimen of *Xenospongia patelliformis* in spirits from the same locality (*loc. cit.* p. 32).

The sponge that Dr. Bowerbank has figured as the type of a new species under the name of *Spongionella Holdsworthii* (P. Z. S. 1873, t. v. and t. vi. f. 7) is the same as *Spongia papyracea*, Esper (Pflanzenthiere, part ii. p. 38, t. lxv. and t. lxv. *a*), who received it from the missionaries Johm and Rottler, from Tranquebar. The larger specimen is figured as attached to a pearl-oyster, on one of the banks of which Mr. Holdsworth found his specimen; but it is a very variable species, sometimes being cup-shaped, at others expanded and ear-like. This sponge has been formed into a genus under the name of *Phyllospongia*. It has very little affinity and quite a different structure to *Spongionella pulchra*, which is considered the type of the genus.

Mr. Carter informs me that the *Haliphysema tubulatum* (P. Z. S. 1873, p. 29, t. vii.) is a massive form of his *Dictyocylindrus* of the British coast; the colour and spicules are nearly the same. There is, in the collection of Ceylon sponges, a specimen whose complement of spicules equals, if not surpasses, all sponges of its kind. See Mr. Carter's description and illustration of this species, Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. 1871, vii. p. 268, t. 17, from a small piece found on *Ectyon sparsus*. Mr. Holdsworth's specimen is half as big as a man's head. This sponge is my *Acarnus innominatus*.

Mr. Carter informs me, *Isodictya Donnani* of this paper is no *Isodictya* at all! It is allied to *Dictyocylindrus*. It is of a fibrous horny structure, the spicules in distinct fibres in little tufts on the surface at the end, whereas *Isodictya* has no horny fibre, only spicules matted into a kind of fibre with amorphous sarcode. This sponge is very abundant on the Pearl-banks; indeed we have specimens of it in the British Museum, presented by Captain Belcher; and I greatly doubt its being an unnamed species.

Mr. Carter finds *Spongionella* has a simple horny fibre, not enclosed in any sand or spicule, confirming its being *Spongia papyracea* of Esper.

On Ursus euryrhinus, *Nilsson*. By Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S. &c.

In the 'Catalogue of Carnivorous Mammalia in the British Museum,' p. 235, I referred to the genus *Helarctos*, with doubt, a bear described by Prof. Nilsson in his account of Swedish Mammalia, under the name of *Ursus euryrhinus*, which he described from a skull in the Museum of Lund, said to have come from Hungary.

Prof. Nilsson, in February of this year, kindly presented to the British Museum a plaster cast of this skull, by which I observe that the skull is evidently from an animal long kept in confinement, and much altered from its usual shape, so that I should be unable to determine to what species it really belongs, or even whether it is distinct from the common European bear.

File-fish (Balistes capriscus) *at Weymouth.*

A specimen of the file-fish was taken on the 14th of May off the Portland Breakwater, on a pout-line baited with a lobworm, and has been sent to the British Museum by Mr. William Thompson, who has kindly made the following notes:—

"The fish was 14½ inches long to the centre of the caudal fin; the length from the caudal to the extremity of the longer outer ray 2 inches, making the entire length 16½ inches; the greatest depth 7½ inches. The colour dark smoky grey, very much lighter (almost white) on the under parts; the two dorsal, the anal, and caudal fins spotted, lined, and blotched with ultramarine blue." Mr. Thompson observes that the illustrations of Couch and Yarrell must have been taken from a fish that had lost the outer ray of the caudal fin, which is the case with Couch's specimen which he sent to the British Museum. Mr. Thompson says that he has taken two anchovies, a sea-lamprey 14, and a sand-launce 12½ inches long.

The file-fish has been several times during the summer season